



June 3, 2010

Dear Colleagues:

As you know, the release of the New York State Testing Program (NYSTP) Grades 3–8 English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics assessments has been rescheduled for later this summer (see <http://www.oms.nysed.gov/press/Grades3-8TestScoresReleaseDateChange.html>). Below are some additional changes that will be necessary to align with this revised schedule.

Accountability Status Determinations for 2010–11

Since results for the NYSTP Grades 3–8 ELA and Mathematics assessments are used to determine accountability at the elementary/middle level, the Department is seeking an extension from the United States Education Department (USED) for the public release of 2010–11 accountability status determinations for elementary/middle schools. USED may consider this extension request because the delay is necessary to complete a study of the revised Grades 3-8 assessments to ensure that valid and reliable information is returned to school districts, parents, and students. The state assessments were revised this year to cover more content and to be less predictable, as well as become better indicators of proficiency and a more useful tool in preparing college and career-ready students.

In order to release accountability status determinations for elementary/middle and secondary schools at the same time, we will also request permission from USED to delay the public posting of 2010–11 accountability status determinations for secondary schools and school districts. USED may deny this request, however, and require that accountability lists for secondary schools be released publicly prior to the start of the 2010–11 school year.

To assist schools whose improvement status requires that they provide parental notification of options for Supplemental Education Services (SES) or Public School Choice prior to the start of the 2010–11 school year, in June 2010 we will provide districts with a notification of the potential 2010–11 status determinations for their component schools based on the prior year's performance. In most cases, districts can use this information to determine whether a school will or will not need to provide SES or Public School Choice in the 2010–11 school year before 2009–10 AYP determinations become available.

Verification Reports and Final SIRS Reporting Deadline

To ensure the timely release of preliminary accountability information for schools with students in grades 9–12, verification of secondary-level accountability data using the High School Accountability Verification Reports and preAORs remains on schedule. Beginning in early July, preAORs with secondary-level accountability AYP determinations based on data in Level 2 of the SIRS will be available on nySTART. Data in Level 2 of the SIRS on July 30, 2010 will be used to make preliminary differentiated accountability status determinations for schools with students in grades 9–12. If required by USED, these data (as of July 30, 2010) will be used for the public release of accountability status determinations prior to the start of the 2010–11 school year. Districts are expected to use these data to offer SES or public school choice to eligible students in grades 9-12 prior to the start of the school year.

If NYSED is granted the requested extension by USED, the final deadline for reporting elementary/middle-level 2009–10 data in the SIRS, which was originally scheduled for July 30, 2010, will be delayed. In addition, schools and districts may be allowed to make changes, if necessary, to secondary-level data until the later deadline. Preliminary differentiated accountability status determinations for schools with students in grades 9–12 could be impacted if secondary-level data are revised between July 30, 2010 and the later reporting deadline.

What You Can Do Now

Districts and schools are strongly encouraged to continue to review data currently available in the nySTART and Level 2 reports to ensure that all students are correctly identified for accountability determinations and appropriate accountability assessments are administered, scored, and reported on time for these students. In addition, please verify that all students are coded with the correct grade, enrollment location, and accountability subgroup designations (e.g., race/ethnicity, limited English proficient, economically disadvantaged, students with disabilities).

Districts and schools should continue to review the information in these reports as more data become available. These reports will be updated every Tuesday morning until the close of the 2009–10 verification window. If you discover that data for listed students are incorrect, please make the necessary changes in your local student management systems and load the revised data into the SIRS. These changes will be reflected in nySTART and Level 2 Reports the following week.

In summary:

- Please stay on track to verify all 2009–10 elementary/middle- and secondary-level data in the SIRS by July 30, 2010;
- Data for students in grades 9–12 that are in Level 2 of the SIRS by July 30, 2010 will be used to determine which schools must comply with federal requirements

for parental notification of SES or Public School Choice prior to the start of the 2010–11 school year;

- Depending on the USED response to our extension request, data for students in grades 9–12 that are in Level 2 of the SIRS by July 30, 2010 may be used by NYSED for the public posting of accountability status determinations prior to the start of the 2010–11 school year;
- The final verification deadline for elementary/middle-level data will most likely be extended. While this verification window is open, secondary-level data may still be updated.

I will share details regarding the outcome of the extension request as soon as they become available. If you have questions about this information, please contact the Office of Information and Reporting Services by phone (518-474-7965) or e-mail (dataquest@mail.nysed.gov). You may also contact your Regional Information Center or Big 5 Data Coordinator if you have questions about data contained in the SIRS. Thank you for all your hard work on behalf of all the students of our State.

Alan Ray
Assistant Commissioner
P-16 Policy and Strategic Planning